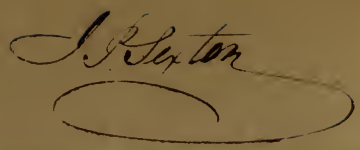

CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD.

A

DISCOURSE

IN REVIEW OF THE

REV. DR. WILKES' SERMON,

ENTITLED

"WHO IS CHRIST?"

DELIVERED IN

THE UNITARIAN CHURCH, MONTREAL, ON SUNDAY EVENING, JAN. 19, 1851,

BY JOHN CORDNER.

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.

Montreal:
PRINTED BY JAMES POTTS, HERALD OFFICE.

1851.

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1851
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The EDITH *and* LORNE PIERCE
COLLECTION *of* CANADIANA

Queen's University at Kingston

I. Bleston
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It has been thought that the usefulness of the following discourse would depend in a great measure on the promptness of its utterance and appearance. Whatever has been prepared in haste, must always bear some marks of haste. But this, we know, is no adequate apology for serious errors. It is to be hoped, however, that none such will be found in the following pages. To thoughtful, reverent, and candid seekers after Christian Truth in all Churches, I humbly commend it. May the Spirit of God assist and guide all such in their investigations.

J. C.

CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD.

MAT. XVI., 15, 16.—"Whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

"Who is Christ?" here is the question put by the Lord Jesus himself, and here is the Apostolic answer.

The appearance of a pamphlet during the past week purporting to give a definite and orthodox answer to the question "Who is Christ?" has led to the selection of these words as a text, from which I propose to offer some farther remarks on the same topic. And it is only proper I should state here, that this step would not have been taken, had it not been for the expressed desire of many persons to this effect, and some of these persons not members of my own congregation. Controversy is a task never specially grateful to my own feelings, and least of all do I desire to direct special strictures on the exercises of any of the neighbouring pulpits. In the case before us, however, we can fairly do so without violating any rule of ordinary courtesy, since the respected preacher has freely given his sermon to the public, and permitted it to be printed from his own manuscript. Having done so, it is no longer to be regarded as the special property of any individual, or congregation. It belongs to you, to me, to all. It is public property, and legitimately amenable to public criticism. I, for my part, thank the author for its publication. Moreover, in the judgment of some, an answer seems to be demanded by him on page 15; where, in reference to those who differ from him on the point under discussion, he says "it would not be impertinent to ask, what they think of Christ? We confess to an impatience of the merely negative. &c. * * * * * We repeat the query, What is Christ?" This repeated demand, it has been thought, ought to be granted. And I think so too, provided there be any reasonable prospect of doing good by the reply. We do not hold ourselves bound to accept every challenge, but we do hold ourselves bound to state and defend our views of Christianity, whenever we think the circumstances of the times require it, and the cause of simple Scriptural Truth may be served by it.

And this, I apprehend, is the only legitimate aim of controversy. But it is sad to think how frequently it has been marred or forgotten. The divine form of Truth has been too commonly lost sight of amid the distracted tempest of man's tumultuous passions. Railing has been put in the place of persuasion; theological termagancy has been substituted for reasonable argumentation; men willing to hear, but at the same time resolved to judge for themselves, have been address-

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ed as obstinate fools; weak and ill tempered polemics have sought to gratify their own pride of opinion, rather than serve the sacred cause of Truth; and thus has the heavenly and healing spirit of the blessed Jesus been trampled under foot in unseemly quarrels about his religion.

It is pleasant to observe that in the sermon just published, there is no abuse of Unitarians, nor anything which violates Christian comity.* This entitles it to a respectful consideration from us, which it would not deserve, and should not receive, if the case were otherwise.† The arguments are put with greater or less force, but we see no unseemly manifestations of temper. And this leaves us without excuse if we lose our proper temper in the discussion.

All controversy has its advantages and its disadvantages. But controversy concerning the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, while in some cases it may be highly beneficial, has yet peculiar perils. It has a tendency to keep the recognition and contemplation of our Saviour too exclusively in the domain of the understanding, while, if I apprehend his religion aright, his proper abiding place is in the region of the heart. He was a Manifestation of the Father's love to man, and given to be loved by us, rather than to be argued about. His throne ought to be in the affections. To have Him, the Christ, formed within, living and breathing in the disciple, controlling the thoughts, feelings, words, and actions, making the entire inward and outward life holy, harmonious, and divinely beautiful —this is the triumph of the believer, and his hope of glory.

* This remark, while it applies to the Sermon, scarcely applies to the Author's note, which precedes his Sermon. He speaks there of "the *friends* of the Redeemer"—meaning thereby, those who stand with himself within the circle of conventional Orthodoxy, which, by the way, when we come to scrutinize it, we find to be dimly enough defined. Hence, by implication, all who cannot take their place within his theological circle, become the *enemies* of the Redeemer. Now we contend that no man has a right to pronounce such dogmatic judgments. We abide by the words of Jesus as the highest form of Orthodoxy. And by these we learn that the humble disciples, who are careful in thought and word to keep his holy commandments, are accounted by himself as his *friends*, (John xv. 14). "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord Lord," &c., (Matthew vii. 21.) We respectfully commend to our Orthodox brethren, the careful consideration of the practical Orthodoxy of the Lord Christ.

† We say this, because we will never recognise abuse as argument. Unitarians in this region have reason for congratulation when they are spared abuse from the pulpit and the press, as their views are brought under notice. A certain class of preachers and pamphleteers, instead of encouraging the "search of the Scriptures," and the "proving of all things," until "full persuasion" should legitimately come to the mind, are occupied rather with "warning" the people against certain opinions, or, it may be against persons. This, doubtless, has its effect, with many minds, but whether the effect is edifying, we leave it to intelligent Christians to decide. It is a favorite stroke of oratory with this class, to represent Unitarians as identical with infidels, without making any reference to the fact, that Unitarians habitually appeal to the Sacred Scriptures as authoritative, and universally believe in the Divine mission of Jesus, as the Messiah of God. Another device is sometimes adopted to give greater effect, and that is, to set forth Unitarians as *worse* than infidels, since the latter have the grace of candor, which the former want. According to this last stroke, the Unitarians are not only infidels, but infidels in disguise, deliberately compassing the ruin of souls—of their own, as well as the rest; although it would be difficult, on any known principles, to explain what special charm eternal perdition should have for them, more than other mortals. Mistakes are occasionally made, however, in such cases, which would be amusing, were it not for the solemn connection in which they occur. In their excessive zeal against Unitarianism, preachers are sometimes found unconsciously citing Unitarian writers to sustain their confused argument. This has happened at least twice in this city, within a few years past. We have reason to believe that in some quarters the pews are getting in advance of the pulpits.

And to this end should we all humbly, earnestly, and patiently strive, as to the great end of our being. But if curious and speculative men will penetrate the interior nature of the Lord's Anointed, as they have attempted to penetrate the interior nature of the Infinite Jehovah himself—if they persist in marking off this blessed Manifestation into two distinct natures, as they persist in partitioning off the Almighty One into three distinct subsistences—then must we exert the faculties of the understanding that we may stand clear of their errors, and preserve for ourselves the Scriptural Christ, rather than the Metaphysical Christ—the Christ of the Bible, rather than the Christ of the Creeds.

I do not envy the mind that can remain indifferent to the momentous truths involved in this question. The honor of the Lord Christ requires that we be on our guard against the perilous consequences of mere human speculation: it requires that we should accept his own teachings concerning himself in their simple and obvious meaning. The honor of the Lord Christ requires that we hold our human inferences in humble subordination to his express declarations: it requires that we do not attribute to him that vulgar ambition, which is flattered and gratified by the bestowal of titles to which he never laid claim. The honor of the Lord Christ requires that we give perfect deference just to what he has said, and reverent obedience to what he has commanded. It is thus that we shall best honor Christ; not by the creation of a Christ of our own, from the subtleties of our human reason, mixed up with the declarations of Scripture, but by receiving with simple child-like faith the declarations he has made concerning himself and his mission.

I repeat it, I do not envy any minds that can remain indifferent to the momentous truths involved in this discussion, and are afraid to stir, lest some present consequences should be inconvenient—who, for the sake of temporal interest, or present convenience, are content to walk crooked before God, that they may appear smooth, and straight, and respectable before men.* Wherever such unfaithfulness to conscience exists, let it be judged by God in his mercy, and not by man in his weakness. But this I know, that a true souled man would rather have his body chained in the galleys, with his mind free, than have his body at ease, and clothed in purple, and his mind thus in bondage to his neighbor. While I speak, then, I would seek to address free and noble minds, candid and honest minds, humble and Christian minds. The free and noble minds will search for themselves like the Bereans of old. The candid and honest minds will openly profess

* A friend observes with reference to this remark, that it would be a curious item of statistics, if we knew how many disbelievers in the doctrine of the Trinity, are engaged in sustaining Trinitarian churches in this city. But we say, "Be of good cheer, O Friend, better is it to gather in a barn with only two or three, and worship according to conscience, than bow in a Cathedral, with a multitude, before the forms of a Creed, which you inwardly disbelieve." The end is not yet. When the Lord in judgment has to enquire—"Man, why wert thou not true to conscience?" it will be but a poor excuse to say—"Lord, I should have been so, only it might have put me to some inconvenience."

what they inwardly believe. The humble and Christian minds, whatever be their own conclusions, will ever encourage others to be true to their convictions, and exercise Christ-like charity towards all.

In the sermon under review our attention is specially directed to "The teaching of Jesus Christ, as it related to his eternal existence, and to the constitution of his person".—And in order to prove the eternal existence, the following quotations are offered on p. 6, from the words of the Lord himself:—"Before Abraham was, I am." "Glorify me with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."—"Thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world."—"He describes (I here quote the sermon) the Son of man as seated on the throne of judgment, who shall invite the justified to enter into the kingdom prepared for them *before the foundation of the world;* and if it be asked who *then* prepared it, he replies—I prepare a place for you". Now here I submit that the proof fails to meet the proposition. For the most which these citations can be understood to prove, is the existence of Christ prior to a given point of time. But this is far from being adequate to meet the requirement of the case.—To state to me that any given being, or thing, was in existence prior to the great French Revolution, is no proper proof that it was in existence at the time of the Protestant Reformation. Nor would proof of its existence, prior to the Reformation, be adequate evidence of its existence since the beginning of the Christian era. These texts are accepted by many Unitarians as proof of the existence of our Lord before his appearance in the flesh. But eternal existence is very different from simple prëexistence, and while they obviously fail of proving the former, they may be regarded as proof of the latter.

It is very commonly urged by Trinitarians, however, that the expression employed in the first quotation is identical with the incommunicable name, and therefore proof of eternal existence. But this seems to me wholly unauthorized. Let us see how it would read according to this interpretation,—"Before Abraham was, *Jehovah.*" In such an expression I can discover no relevant meaning. The phrase used by Jesus is one which was in common use, and if a theological purpose had not to be served, would be regarded according to its ordinary signification. Previously, in the same chapter (John viii), we find him making use of the same expression (v.v. 24, 28), but as the English translators have there supplied the pronoun *he,* we see the meaning of it plainly enough indicated. If they had only supplied the same pronoun in v. 58—"Before Abraham was, I am *he*"—it would, at once be seen from the scope of the whole passage, that he was simply asserting his Messiahship. This point is conceded by some of the most eminent Trinitarian theologians—such men as the Rev. James Carlile, and the Rev. Dr. Pye Smith.*

* The Rev. Jas. Carlile, in his Work, entitled "Jesus Christ the great God our Saviour," says, "I do not mean to rest any argument on the expression, *I am,* taken by itself. It occurs repeatedly in this chapter, and is translated, *I am*

The other texts cited under this head, are John xvii., 5 and 24, "Glorify me with the glory which I had with thee before the world was," and "Thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." Now I contend that these expressions not only fail to prove eternal existence, but when properly regarded are found to fall in naturally with the general current of Scripture, and go to strengthen the position of the Unitarians. They occur in a prayer of Jesus to the Father. In the discourse before us they are styled exclamations. I should not call them so. I look upon them as the calmest possible utterances, poured from the overflowing fulness of a serene and Godlike spirit into the ear of Infinite Love. If Jesus were the Supreme God he would not require to pray, for he would have the source of all strength inherent in himself.—This is the argument of the Unitarian. To which the Trinitarian replies by his unauthorised theory of the "two natures," and says he prayed in his human nature only. But this will not suit the exigency of the case. In his human nature it is not pretended that he had prëexistent glory, so that as far as this was concerned, he could not pray for the restoration of such glory. Assuming the theory to be true, if the prayer came from the human nature of Christ only, then it must have been the prayer of this nature on behalf of the divine nature —in other words, a man interceding on behalf of God. But we recoil from the anomaly of such a supposition. Moreover, let us consider to whom he offered the prayer. Was it to himself? It must have been so if he was Supreme God. It must have been to himself, and two other persons—the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—the orthodox Trinity. But his prayer is to one person only—the Father—as may be seen frequently and emphatically declared throughout this same xvii. chapter of John. Indeed, the whole of the Gospels show that Jesus lived praying to the Father, and he died praying to the Father.

With regard to the last text quoted under this head, I have also a remark to offer, with the view of casting some clearer light on its meaning. It is stated in the discourse under review, that Jesus shall invite the the faithful "to enter into the kingdom prepared for them *before the foundation of the world;* and if it be asked, who *then* prepared it, he replies —'I prepare a place for you.'" Now it will be observed here, that the question put has reference to time past, while the reply said to be given has reference to time present. But the preacher probably quoted from memory, and alludes here to John

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he. Neither shall I argue from its supposed reference to the name by which Jehovah revealed himself to Moses, *I am that I am.* It seems to me very probable that there was such a reference; but I dare not found an argument on that probability.

And Dr. Pye Smith, in his "Scripture Testimony," says, "Some suppose that, in using the expression *I am*, our Lord intended a reference to the Divine appellation announced to Moses, 'I am that which I am.' But it is to be remarked, that the words of that passage are in the future tense, 'I will be that which I will be,' (Exodus iii 14.); and most probably it was not intended as a name, but as a declaration of the certain fulfilment of all the promises of God, especially those which related to the deliverance of the Israelites. There does not appear, therefore, sufficient ground to sustain the idea of an allusion to this."

xiv., 2, and if so, it will be seen that the quotation is scarcely made with sufficient precision. As spoken by our Lord, the words are, "*I go to prepare* a place for you"—thus referring to time future. Thus, while the question put by way of argument in the discourse has reference to time past, the reply there recorded has properly reference to time future. We submit that a more synchronous and consistent reply would have been found in those other words of our Saviour recorded in Mat. xx., 23, "to sit on my right and on my left is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom *it is prepared of my Father.*

Respecting the constitution of Christ's person, the discourse states, that "Ancient prophecy led them [the Jews] to expect *a duality of natures in one person.*" This we take leave to deny. The Jewish people, as far as I have been able to learn, have cherished no such expectation. And I must have proof before I can believe the assertion of the discourse on this point. Whether they are right or wrong, I do not here give any opinion, but the Jews have never so interpreted their ancient Scriptures. They have expected, and still expect, that their Messiah will have a *twofold character*—that he will be a Temporal Prince, as well as a Spiritual Potentate or Teacher. This is the opinion of Maimonides and the leading Jewish Commentators. In this connection, and with the view of proving the Supreme Deity of the Messiah, that passage from Isaiah is adduced in the discourse:—"Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given, * * * * * and his name shall be called * * * * * * * the Mighty God." The weight of the proof rests here on the importance to be attached to this term. The Hebrew phrase, here rendered Mighty God, is El-Gebor. But the force of any argument drawn from this must be materially diminished by the consideration of the fact, that there are many names in the Sacred Scriptures, of which the Hebrew term, *El*, God, forms a constituent part. Thus, the name Gabriel is represented by the same Hebrew characters, under different construction. This name is compounded of the same noun and adjective, and by etymological analysis is found to signify the "Strong or Mighty God." Compounds of this description were common among the Hebrews. Thus the Hebrew name Elijah signifies in English, "God the Lord;" the name Daniel, "God my Judge."* The whole passage, how-

* We subjoin a few of these Hebrew compound names, with their English equivalents; taken from the Table of Scripture Names, in Cruden's Concordance:—
Abiel, God my Father.
Ariel, Lion of God.
Abiah, or Abijah, the Lord is my Father.
Benaiah, Son of the Lord.
Eli, My God.
Eliab, God my Father.
Elihu, He is my God himself. [Had this term appeared in Isaiah ix. 6, how powerful it would appear!]
Gabriel, My Strong God.
Israel, A Prince with God.
Immanuel, God with us.
Lemuel, God with them.
Nathanael, The Gift of God.
Phanuel, Face of God.
Uzziel, Strength of God.

ever, in which the name *El-Gebor* occurs, is confessedly obscure; and is said by the eminent translator of Isaiah, Bishop Lowth, to be attended with "many and great difficulties."—Nevertheless, it is obvious from the succeeding verse, that whatever may be the character or dignity of the person referred to, he is to be dependent on Jehovah for the increase of his government, and the establishment of his kingdom.—"The zeal of Jehovah of Hosts will perform this."

The next point which calls for any special attention is presented on p. 8 of the discourse. There the author purports to set forth the difference between the Lord Jesus and other Teachers. To us a difference is indeed obvious—just such a difference as should be expected from the simple facts of the case; that while to others the Spirit was given under limitation, to him it was given without measure. The striking rhetorical effect of antithesis seems to be understood by the respected writer of the sermon, and he thus employs it in the case before us. Other teachers, he says, "hide *themselves* in their message, whereas Christ is the *burden of his own message.* They direct attention to *Deity.* He does so, but it is by concentrating attention upon *himself.* They unfold Jehovah as the object of faith, of confidence, of love; so does *He,* but it is by presenting *Himself* as that object, and claiming the faith, the trust, the homage, the service of universal man. We urge special attention to this diversity". Now the rhetorical arrangement of these words is admirable, but to our apprehension they are fatally defective, from lack of support in the Sacred Records. According to this statement, the Lord Jesus in his teaching "*concentrated attention upon himself.*" We cannot withhold confession of surprise at this statement. Will the Gospels authorise it? We commend all candid minds to the examination. When teaching his disciples that simple form of prayer ever so dear to the world, because associated with his own name, does he there "concentrate attention upon *himself*"? Is it not to *the Father* that he directs the attention of his followers? "After this manner pray ye, *Our Father,* &c." I take up the New Testament, and it so happens that the pages of the fourth Evangelist present themselves as I open it. I turn over these pages and everywhere meet with such phrases as the following from the lips of our Lord. "*The Father* that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." "The word which ye hear is not mine, but *the Father's* which sent me." "*The living Father* hath sent me, and I live by *the Father.*" "I do nothing of myself, but as *the Father* hath taught me I speak these things." "I can of mine own self do nothing." "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of *him that sent me.*" "My doctrine is not mine, but *his that sent me.*" "*He that sent me* is true, and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him." "I have glorified *thee* [*the Father*] on the earth." "I have power to lay it [my life] down, and power to take it again. *This commandment have I received of my Father.*" "In that day ye shall ask me nothing. Whatsoever ye shall ask *the Father* in my name, he will give it you." "*My Father* is greater than *I.*"

"*My Father* is greater than *all*." "I seek not mine own glory." "The true worshippers shall worship *the Father*." We might quote farther to the same effect, from this same Gospel of St. John, and we might also cite copiously from the other Gospels. Now we respectfully ask, with what consistency can it be alleged as a peculiarity of Christ's teaching, that he "concentrated attention upon *himself*," when we find from the Gospels that such was the prevailing character of his utterances?

No one can deny that in the discourse under review, the most is made of the scripture texts adduced by way of proof. Thus, it is asked in connection with the following simple text: "What mere creature, however exalted, could, without intolerable presumption, place himself in parallelism with the Lord Almighty, as Christ does in the complaint: 'They have both seen and hated both me and my Father.'"? Now to this we simply reply, that if being subjected to the world's hate, as well as the Father Almighty, is valid proof of Supreme Deity, then the disciples must be included also. For whoever reads the whole passage will see that the disciples were objects of the world's hate, as well as Christ and the Father. This is sufficient to show the futility of the alleged proof.

Next, in a like manner, it is demanded:—"Who else but this great one could, without wickedness, place his own commandments alongside the Divine, indeed make them the *Divine will*, and peremptorily demand obedience? 'A new commandment I GIVE unto you.' 'Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I COMMAND you.'" From the small capitals, we apprehend that the weight of the argument is supposed to reside in the words so marked. Now suppose we cite any of those passages where Moses speaks authoritatively to the people, as: "All the commandments which I COMMAND thee this day, shall ye observe and do." Would this prove the Supreme Deity of Moses? It will be urged that Moses got the commandments from God. Well, then, let the Lord Jesus explain himself.—"I came *not to do mine own will*." "I have not spoken of myself; but THE FATHER, which sent me, HE GAVE ME A COMMANDMENT, what I should say, and what I should speak."

On page 9 of the pamphlet under review several other Scripture texts are introduced. Some of these, in proof of the pre-existence, are brought forward for the second time, and have already been remarked upon. The others are intended, I presume, to prove identity of essence between the Father and the Son. "Ye neither know me nor my Father." "He that hath known me, hath known the Father." "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father." "I and my Father are one." "No one knoweth the Son but the Father." Now these passages shew an intimate spiritual union between the Father and the Son, but cannot be taken as satisfactory evidence of identity of essence, or equality of rank. I would select the most precise of them as a key to the others:—"I and my Father are one." And I learn the meaning of this passage from the explanation of the Lord Jesus himself, given in John XVII. 21, 22, 23, where he prays on behalf of the dis-

ciples, "That they *all may be one;* as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that *they also may be one in us;* that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them; *that they may be one, even as we are one.* I in them, and thou in me, that may be made perfect in one." The oneness, then, which subsists between the Father and the Son, is not to be regarded as identity of essence, or equality of rank, but as a spiritual union—a oneness of spirit—in which all true and faithful disciples shall likewise participate. Such is the view taken of this text, by many, probably the majority, of the most eminent Trinitarian Commentators.*

A number of Scripture passages are next produced, none of which ought to be regarded as proper proof of Supreme Deity. They afford ample evidence of the supernatural endowments of our Lord, but the possession of supernatural powers does not prove the Supreme Deity of the possessor. "He forgives sins, and in testimony, actually *heals,*" says the discourse. "He omnisciently knows the privacy of Nathanael, the doings of the woman, the secret thoughts and reasonings of disciples and accusers; and he distinctly announces them. Can we hear all this without feeling that God must be present in the mysterious speaker? that the throne of Deity must be, in a sense, removed from heaven to earth?" &c. &c. This is another sample of the rhetoric of the discourse, which is ever drawn on to assist and strengthen the quotations from Scripture. And here I would take leave to caution you, and all candid enquirers, against the use, and the seductive influences, of such human resources in your investigations after Truth. When engaged in this most dignified employment, keep your sensibilities in wholesome restraint, so that the light of the understanding may be permitted to shine calm and clear, for it is thus only, that we can properly discern the great object of our search. We are all creatures of passion and prejudices, and anything which has the slightest tendency to move these, in our investigations after Truth, we should immediately suspect, and carefully set aside. Divine Truth carries a power in itself which makes it independent of the helps of human amplification and rhetoric; and like the highest form of beauty, when unadorned is adorned the most. It is the inferior jewel which requires the aid of the cunning workman to set it forth in curious and captivating ornament. The diamond requires no filagree work. Its setting is simple, for its superior value is sure to be revealed by the depth and splendor of its own brilliancy. Now, apart from the imposing language with which they are connected, what are the *facts* deduced from the Scrip-

* Calvin says, "The ancients improperly used this passage to prove that Christ is of the same substance as the Father. For he does not argue concerning unity of substance, but speaks of his agreement with the Father, so that whatever is done by Christ, will be confirmed by the Father's power."

And Professor Stuart in his letters to Channing, writes—"It seems to me, that the meaning of 'I and my Father are one,' is simply, 'I and my Father are united in counsel, design and power' So in John xvii. 20, 21, Christ prays that all who shall believe in him *may be one.* 'As thou, Father,' continued he, 'art in me, and I in thee; so they also *may be one* in us;' i. e. that the disciples may have 'the same mind which was in Christ Jesus.'"

tural quotations given in this portion of the discourse, and set forth so confidently to prove the Supreme Deity of our Lord? Simply these: that he healed sicknesses, knew the inward thoughts of others, and the like—in other words, that he possessed supernatural powers. But every reader of the Scriptures knows, that others possessed supernatural powers likewise, so that the simple possession of them, proves nothing to the point. The question is, were they inherent or derived? We say they were derived, and we affirm this from a comprehensive survey of the teachings of the Lord Jesus—such a survey as enables us to see all parts together, and explain one portion by another. It is through such a survey only, that we can arrive at an adequate and impartial knowledge of Christ's teachings concerning himself. If we are to be guided simply by the teachings of the Lord Jesus himself, we must believe that all the power possessed by him, in heaven and earth, *is derived.* "All power," he says, "*is given unto me,* in heaven and in earth." "*Thou* [*the Father*] *hast given him* [*the Son*] *power over all flesh, that he should give,*" &c.

We cannot quit the review of the paragraph before us without noticing another remarkable sentence. "Christ calls himself emphatically the Son of Man, and solemnly announces that there is a sense in which the Father is greater than he, a statement which no *mere creature* could ever have thought it necessary to make." Now what is meant by stating here that "Christ announces there *is a sense* in which the Father is greater than he?" Where does he make this announcement? I reply, no where. If he did, it would give a new character to the controversy between the Trinitarian and the Unitarian. It would give something like intimation, at least, of the Trinitarian's favorite theory of "two natures" in Christ. Such may *have been the preacher's conception* of Christ's declaration, but what authority is there for this statement, as the declaration stands in the Record? No such intimation is given. Let the candid enquirer consult the Scripture. The saying of Jesus is unconditional and absolute. "My Father is greater than I." Here again, in the extract under notice, we discover how the rhetoric of the pulpit melts away into nothing, when the simple logic of common sense comes to look at it. It is said that the statement (My Father is greater than I) is one "which no *mere creature* could ever have thought it necessary to make." But the Apostle John states (1 John iii. 20,) that "God is greater than our heart,"—a statement of which it might also be said that "no *mere creature* could ever have thought it necessary to make it." However imposing such remarks may be in appearance, we find them, in reality, only solemn trifling.

Now let us consider the matter soberly. *From* none but a being of derived existence could such a statement possibly come with truth. *Of* none but such an one could it possibly be true. If the Lord Jesus was the Supreme God, then it was not true, and the statement thus absolutely made by him, standing as it does without any explanation from him, was calculated to deceive the people. He also states, "My Father

is greater than *all*;" *i. e.* than all others, and all else. Such statements ought to be accepted, we think, as adequate proof of the Supremacy of the Father, by all persons whose previous training or prejudices do not interfere with their candid reception of them.

It is thought the common theory of the "two natures" protects the Trinitarian position from all the difficulty of such plain statements of the subordination of the Son, and the Supremacy of the Father. But does it in reality? We think not. "My Father is greater than *I*." It might protect it from this difficulty. But when the statement is made universal, it obviously fails—as "My Father is greater than *all*." Admitting for a moment the alleged duality of natures, it is evident that the superior, as well as the inferior nature, is comprehended within this universal term, and thus placed in subordination to the Father. Observe also that Christ says on another occasion:—"Of that day and that hour, knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but *my Father only*." In the parallel passage, it is thus written:—"Of that day, and that hour, knoweth no man, no, not the angels who are in heaven, *neither the Son*, but the Father." Now here is a precision of expression on the part of our Lord, which sets the prevailing theory of the "two natures" at defiance, and conclusively overthrows it. There seems here to be a gradation of expression starting from humanity, (which, of course, includes the humanity of Jesus), rising to angelic existence, then to the Son, (which must here include the highest nature which he can be regarded as possessing,) and capping the climax with the name of the Father, to whom, and to the *exclusion of all the others*, the knowledge in question belongs. Here, then, is a precise and emphatic disclaimer on the part of Christ of absolute omniscience in his highest possible capacity, and an affirmation from him, which directly involves the absolute and exclusive Supremacy of the Father. What is to be done here? Evidently the theory of the "two natures" fails in this case. Shall we accept the Christ of Christ's own teaching, or shall we still cling to the Christ of the more popular theology? Choose ye this day whom ye will accept, but as for me and my house, we will cleave to the living and life giving Christ of the Gospels.

We are glad to observe that this ill-grounded theory of the "two natures" is passing into disrepute even among the ranks of our orthodox brethren. This is natural, since it is nowhere to be seen stated in the Scriptures. If it were any where affirmed in the Bible that Christ had "two natures"—if it were any where said by himself, 'This, I say, in my divine,' and 'this in my human nature'—or if any such distinction were put forth by his Apostles, we should then be satisfied. But no such statements are to be found. The theory is a theological assumption, said, indeed, to be necessary to the proper interpretation of the Scripture. This, however, we deny. We fully agree with an eminent living divine, occupying a prominent place within the circle of orthodoxy, when he says: "There is no solid foundation for the common Trini-

tarian theory of two distinct or distinctly active subsistences in the person of Christ. It is not Scriptural. It accounts for nothing. It only creates even greater difficulties."* And Dr. Hawker, also, another orthodox divine, in his Sermons on the Divinity of Christ, writes:—"From this (John xiv., 28) and several similar texts, an argument hath been drawn to prove that Christ cannot be God, from this acknowledged inferiority. This objection hath been replied to, by endeavoring to show that, when our Lord speaks at any time in this language, it is to be considered as in reference to his human nature, and not to his divine. But I confess, to my apprehension, this is by no means a satisfactory solution of the difficulty. It is certainly rather waiving than answering the question. For, to suppose that our Lord, in one passage, alludes to his Divinity, and in another, to his humanity, this would be to make Christ speak and act as two distinct beings, which would be an absurdity; and if this were made the standard for explaining the difficulties of Scripture, to what errors would it lead!" Such is the character of the Trinitarian testimony which can be brought against the commonly received theory of the "two natures."†

In the Discourse under review, an unusual share of attention is given to the circumstances of our Lord's trial. The writer thinks that in the confession of Jesus before the high priest, that he was "the Christ, the Son of God," he has dis-

* The author from whom the above quotation is made, is the Rev. Horace Bushnell, D. D., the minister of a numerous and warmly attached church of Orthodox Congregationalists, in Hartford, Connecticut. He is a man of high standing in his denomination, for learning and piety. Three or four years since, we had the privilege of hearing him preach a fine, far-seeing, and comprehensive discourse, on behalf of the Orthodox Home Missions, in the Rev. Dr. Kirk's Church, in Boston. It was the re-delivery, if we remember right, of one previously preached by appointment, before the Home Missionary Society, in New York. The discourse from which I quote, is one of three which are bound together in a volume, bearing the title of "God in Christ," and its subject is the "Divinity of Christ." It was delivered *ad clerum* at the annual commencement of Yale College, in 1848. The preacher was nominated by the General Association of Congregational Ministers of Connecticut, but this does not make any of the individuals thereof responsible for the opinions uttered. The preacher speaks on his own responsibility, leaving others to agree or disagree with him, as their own judgments dictate. He tells them, however, that he has known no other views on the subject discussed, since he began to be a preacher of Christ. We happened to have Dr. Bushnell's book on our reading table, when the discourse under review reached us, and could not resist the temptation of comparing the teaching of the two Orthodox Congregational Ministers on the important subject before us. We found some striking contrasts. Thus, while Dr. Wilkes says, page 7, "Christ's perfect *manhood* was taught—no mystery or doubt was allowed to gather about *that*," Dr. Bushnell says, page 123, "Christ was in such a sense, God, or God manifested, that the unknown term of his natnre, that which we are *most in doubt of*, and about which we are least capable of positive affirmation *is the human*." Dr. Wilkes' Sermon professes to give an explanation as to "the constitution of Christ's person." Dr. Bushnell says: "As regards the composition of Christ's person, we perhaps know nothing.' Dr. Wilkes rests his argument on the theory of "one person, in *two* distinct natures," and appropriates the sayings and doings of the Lord Jesus, now to one, and then to the other, as it suits his purpose. Dr. Bushnell says, "I shall not call Christ two. I shall not decompose him, and label off his doings, one to the credit of his Divinity, and another to the credit of his humanity." He affirms that such a mode "only creates difficulties a hundred-fold greater than any it solves." Viewed in connection with Dr. Wilkes' discourse, Dr. Bushnell's book is extremely interesting to the student of opinion, as shewing the difference which prevails in the teaching of the "Orthodox" doctrines, as these are presented *ad clerum* at Yale College, and *ad populum* in Montreal.

† For farther remarks on the theory of the "two natures," see Appendix.

covered irresistible proof of Supreme Diety. This argument is elaborated through three pages, and concludes with this inference as "the only rational one, that the being who so acted, *is a new form of existence*—that in his person, time and eternity, infinity and limitation, laws the most opposite meet, and are reconciled, and that we behold in him the grand anomaly of infinite majesty clothed in meekness; supreme dominion rendering obedience; absolute sovereignty exhibiting entire resignation; in other and apostolic words, "God manifest in the flesh." A great and weighty conclusion, certainly, from such a slender modicum of Scripture premises! As we we scan this argument from its commencement to its conclusion, we are strongly reminded of a pyramid standing on its apex, which is destined to remain just so long as the air is kept perfectly undisturbed around it. We have heard of a telescope several tons weight, so exquisitely balanced that an infant's touch will move it. Now this inverted pyramid of argument can only stand by some such exquisite nicety of balance, and the slightest stir of the air from investigation, or an infant's touch, will overthrow it.

We may be pardoned if we overlook the structure of the argument which goes on from its slender resting point, increasing in verbal dimensions until it reaches the vast conclusion already stated. All proper purposes will be served by looking at the resting point itself—the little apex of Scriptural testimony which is made to bear the weight of the whole. If any flaw or unsoundness be discovered in this, which would justify its removal, then, of course, the whole of the imposing superstructure must crumble to the ground.

What, then, saith the Scripture concerning the trial of the Lord Jesus? What are the facts of the case, as we gather them by looking carefully at the accounts of the four Evangelists? Briefly stated, the simple and mournful facts seem to be on this wise:—When the enemies of Christ had seized him, they brought him before the priests and council. His death was evidently resolved on. Nothing less would satisfy their envy and malice. At first they do not appear to have any specific charge fixed against him, but trusted to the chance of suborned witnesses to make some accusation which might enable them to accomplish their bad design, through the forms, at least, of a trial. Such witnesses came, and made charges against him, but contradicted each other. Then came others; and their charge was, that he threatened to destroy the temple. He was called on to answer this accusation, but it was so obviously groundless he answered nothing. Then some of the council, knowing that he had still laid claim to be the Messiah, asked him: "Art thou the Christ? tell us." But he knew they would not believe him, and his reply was: "If I tell you, ye will not believe." Then the high priest adjured him to answer whether he were the Christ, the Son of God. Then Jesus affirmed his Messiahship. Failing in the other charges, here was an avowal, upon which a tribunal resolved on the death of its victim, and blind to all sense of right and justice, might construct a charge of blasphemy.

This was done; and amid a storm of rage and excitement, he was then pronounced deserving of death. He was forthwith hurried to the Roman governor, because the power of taking away life did not then remain with the Jews. They were still in the tumult of confusion and passion, and when they brought him to Pilate, commenced urging other accusations against him. Their motives were evident to the Roman governor. He saw they had no fixed or proper charge against him, and knew that it was through envy they delivered Jesus unto him. After examining Christ, he was willing to liberate him. But his enemies would not hear of this, and then they cried out: "We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God." When Pilate heard this, it made him more afraid and cautious, in what he sought to do. Still the rage and excitement of the Jews was so evident, that he had no confidence whatever in the fitness of their accusation, or the justice of their verdict, and he persisted in his endeavor to release Jesus. But the passion of his enemies was not to be satisfied but by his death, and they again shifted their charge to a political one, crying out to Pilate: "If thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend." Hereupon, Pilate resists them no longer, but delivered the Lord to be crucified.

Such are the simple and mournful facts of the case as I think you will find by collation of the accounts of the several Evangelists. We are willing to let this brief statement of scriptural fact stand as an answer to the lengthened and imposing argument of the discourse, where such a stress is put on one of the incidents. Jesus simply affirmed his Messiahship before the high priest and council, as he had ever been in the habit of doing throughout his previous teaching. This was the real amount of the matter. And to base an argument by forcing-process, on the judgment given by avowed enemies, in the heat of passion, boiling with envy, rage, and malice: as if it were a grave, dispassionate, and duly weighed judgment of Westminster Hall, must, we fear, be taken as indication of the weakness of the cause which has to seek such support*

This argument is sufficiently answered, but before we leave it, we may be permitted to enquire what effect any special statement of Jesus concerning himself befored the Jewish council, would have upon the ordinary Trinitarian theologians of the present day? The preacher insists, at great length, that some such special statement was demanded by the circumstances. But suppose such statement made, what effect, we ask, would it have upon the Trinitarian theologian? Suppose that our Lord, when he heard the charge of blasphemy laid against him, had said: "Verily, verily, I say unto you,

* In connection with John x. 30, Professor Stuart makes the following remark, which will hold equally good in the case above examined.—"The malignant disposition which the Jews frequently displayed, may well lead us to suspect, that they would, if possible put such a construction on his words as would subject him to the imputation of blasphemy, or rebellion against the Roman government. I would expound the words of Christ, therefore independently of any construction which his embittered enemies put upon them." The Jews charged Stephen with *blasphemy* against *Moses* and God.—Acts vi, 11.

The Son can do nothing of himself but what he seeth the Father do." If he had answered them "Is it not written in your law I said ye are Gods? If he called them Gods* unto whom the word of God came, and the Scripture cannot be broken; say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest, because I said I am the *Son of God?* If I do not the works of my Father believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works." Now, suppose he had said this in answer to the charge, it would only be what he had said before, to meet similar charges.† He had said all this before, to shew that his laying claim to be the Son of God, was no proper ground on which to construct a charge of blasphemy. And suppose he had repeated it, what effect would it have upon the Jews in their rage of passion? or what effect would it have upon the ordinary Trinitarian theologians of the present day? Obviously none whatever. Have they not already "labelled off" his declarations to this effect, to the account of the human, of his alleged "two natures"? And would they not nullify it again, through the same ready method, by virtue of which, they can always accommodate his sayings to their favorite theological system? Thus rendering the plainest teaching of the Lord of none effect through their traditional theory.

When Peter was asked by the Lord, "Whom say ye that I am?" His answer was: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." This is our answer also, as it ought ever to be the answer of the Scriptural Christian. But as we find the term given to others in the Scriptures as well as to him, it will be requisite for us to consider in what peculiar sense he was the Son of God distinct from those others.

In the book of Job, we find the angelic hosts styled "the Sons of God." There the Almighty is described as demanding of Job where he was when the foundations of the earth were laid, and when "the morning stars sang together, and all the Sons of God shouted for joy?" In the Gospel of Luke, we find Adam styled the "Son of God." Solomon, also, in 1 Chron., is called the Son of God in this manner. The Lord spoke to his father David concerning him, saying: "He shall build a house for my name, and he shall be *my Son*, and I will be his Father." Of the children of Israel, it is said in Hosea that they shall be called the "Sons of God." "It shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said to them, Ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, ye are the Sons of the living God." The Apostle Paul, in addressing the Philippians, when exhorting them to the practice of various Christian graces, thus adverts to the results of such practice:—"That ye may be blameless and harmless (he says,) the Sons of God without rebuke." And the Apostle John, in his epistle to Christians in general, speaks of *them* as being called the "Sons of God." "Behold (he says) what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the Sons of God. * * * Beloved now are we the Sons of God."

* See Table in Appendix. † John v. 19.—x. 34, 35, 36, 37, 38.

The term "Son of God," then, is by no means an unusual one in the Sacred Scriptures. But we maintain that when applied to Jesus of Nazareth, it is used in a high and peculiar sense. In the New Testament it is commonly used as an equivalent for the term Messiah. Thus, in the angelic prediction of Christ's birth, it was said that he should "be called the Son of God," that is, as Dr. Lightfoot says, "He shall be called the Messiah, for *Messiah* and *the Son of God* are convertible terms." In this sense also, Peter evidently understood it when he said: "Thou art the Messiah, the Son of the living God." Such, we are persuaded, was the prevailing idea which the Jews attached to the term. They expected a Messiah, from the predictions of their ancient prophets, but they never looked for the personal appearance of the Supreme God in that capacity. Their Messiah, as the name imports, was to be a chosen and anointed messenger, sent by God to perform a special work for his people on the earth. Up to his last hours on earth, even after the trial, where, through envy and malice, they accused him of blasphemy and other charges, that they might deliver him to be killed, and while he hung upon the Cross, such was still their idea. When they derided him, it was professing to be the "Messiah, the *chosen* of God." Among foes and friends alike, this was the prevailing notion. Go we to the family of Bethany, where the presence of Jesus was specially prized, and where every word he uttered was received as living bread from heaven, and we find the same idea. The bereaved and sorrowing sisters had their hope revived when this blessed Messenger of God's love drew near. One of them, under circumstances the most solemn and touching, confessed her belief in him. Not as the Supreme God, indeed, but as "the Messiah, the Son of God, which should come into the world." And it is evident that while she thus declared her belief in his Messiahship, or Divine Sonship, she also held that he was dependent on that God, whose Son she confessed him to be. She had confidence in his power to restore her brother, but she knew that the original source of such power did not reside in the Messiah, but in God. "Lord, if thou hadst been here," she says, "my brother had not died. But I know that even now, whatsoever *thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee.*"

On this point, we think there is little room for questioning or doubt. It is sufficiently obvious, we think, what the Jews understood by the title. We wish it could be as clearly settled and stated, what Christians mean by the term, Son of God, as applied to the Lord Jesus. On this point, Trinitarians have differences among themselves, and the Unitarians have differences among themselves. Some of the Trinitarians assert the eternal generation of the Son, others affirm his generation in time. The Westminster Divines, in their "Confession of Faith," assert the former opinion:—"The Son is eternally begotten of the Father." While Dr. Adam Clarke pronounces this doctrine destructive of Christ's Deity. "The doctrine of the eternal Sonship," he says, "destroys the Deity of Christ," and from such "heterodoxies," prays deliver-

ance for the church. "The eternal Son of God," says Dr. Pye Smith, "is, notwithstanding his Divine nature, subordinate in the order of the Deity, and even perfectly obedient to the Father. To have been thus subject to the Father, from all eternity, and by the necessity of the Divine personality, is no more incongruous with the proper and essential Divinity of the Son, than it will be after the consummation of the present system of things, when the great parenthesis of the Mediatorial administration shall be completed, and God shall be all in all."* Upon which statement, another Trinitarian Divine, Dr. Symington, remarks: "What the writer of these words means by a necessary and eternal subordination or subjection of the Son to the Father, apart from all respect to the Mediatorial economy, we know not. But we frankly confess for ourselves, that we can form no idea of any such thing, without adopting the Socinian, or the Arian heresy.† In this way do Trinitarians disagree among themselves, concerning the point before us.

And Unitarians also, as I have just said, have differences of opinion among themselves, concerning the person of Jesus as the Son of God. But these differences are of less importance than those of the Trinitarians. None of these affect their belief concerning the Supreme Godhead, or any doctrine considered as fundamental to their system. All Unitarians hold to the strict unity of the Supreme Being, and the unrivalled Supremacy of "the Father," as "the only True God." All Unitarians hold to the obvious teachings of the Son, wherein he constantly declares his subordination to the Father. They regard him as speaking with God's authority. They differ concerning his person, but none of their differences touch these distinguishing and fundamental points, Some hold to his simple humanity, and some believe in his pre-existence.

In controversy between Trinitarians and Unitarians, it is generally found expedient that either party be permitted to merge its internal differences of opinion, and discuss the fundamental principles which distinguish the one from the other. Of what proper avail would it be in us to call on Trinitarians to define and defend the doctrine of the eternal generation of the Son, or any other point of this character, while the great distinguishing principles, involved in our conflicting ideas concerning the Godhead, remain unsettled? Or, of what proper avail is it in Trinitarians to call on us to define and defend the doctrine of the pre-existence of Christ, or any such point under the circumstances mentioned? Dr. Wardlaw speaks judiciously on this matter in a note to one of his discourses:— "When my object," he says, "was to defend a vital doctrine of Christ against those who *oppose* it, I thought it better to shun any dispute with those who *maintain* it."‡ May not the Unitarian also be permitted to say, "When my object is to defend a vital doctrine of religion, such as the absolute and indivisible unity of God, against those who *invade* it, I think

* Smith on Sacrifices, pp. 91, 92.
† Symington's Messiah the Prince, p. 366.
‡ Note to 9th Disc. on Soc. Controversy.

it better to shun any dispute with those who *uphold* it." We may observe, nevertheless, that if any suppose that the Unitarian who believes in Christ's pre-existence, has the same difficulty to contend with respecting the duality of natures, as the Trinitarian, he rests under a grave mistake. So long as the nature of Christ is held to be finite, and not infinite, modifications may be possible therein, which could not be predicated of the Infinite Being without violating first principles. Never for a moment could the Supreme God, on whom the universe depends, be stripped of his power and glory. This were to bring chaos, or worse. Such a notion is incompatible with our idea of his immutable existence. But such a change may be consistently enough affirmed of any other being in the universe, however exalted, for all other existence is derived, and whatever attributes it may possess, might flow back into God, the original source.*

And now, "who is Christ?" We answer, He is the "Son of God." This is the language of Scripture, and denotes the Christ of the Scriptures. We do not call him "God the Son," for this is not the language of Scripture. It is the language of human creeds only, and only denotes the Christ of the Creeds. Peter's answer is ours:—"He is the Son of the living God." Is this declaration not sufficiently definite? The Lord Jesus himself considered it sufficient. Must we define the composition of his person before we can reach a saving faith? Not so, according to my view of the Gospel. If an earthly sovereign sends me a gracious message, it becomes me to accept it thankfully, without subjecting the bearer thereof to rigid scrutiny respecting his person or dignity. I will not be less respectful to my heavenly Sovereign than I should be to an earthly one. If he sends me a Messenger clothed with the fulness of his own authority, I will honor that Messenger accordingly. As I honor the Father, I will honor the Son, for he that honors not the Son, fails in honor to the Father who sent him. To whatever extent, and in whatever degree, the person of the Son forms an integral portion of the message, to that extent, and in that degree, it will shine with noon-day brightness. It does so; and as I discern it, I am moved to love and reverence, for in it I discern a moving manifestation of the Divine Mercy.

Does any one complain that this is not sufficiently definite? I cannot help this. The complaint lies likewise against the celebrated answer of Peter. Our Lord did not press the disciple with any subtleties concerning the composition of his person. He had never taught him a syllable concerning a duality of natures in his person, nor does he now seek any confession of it. His teaching had been, that he was the Christ, the Son of God, and this is the declaration which, for the benefit of the world, he draws from Peter, and which he deems sufficient. With this declaration, and this belief, I

* The remarks offered above, have reference to the case of those who believe in the pre-existent personality of Christ. But a belief in the pre-existence may be held, without passing into this form. A discussion on this topic, however, is not called for here.

will content myself. I will seek no more subtle, or more precise form orthodoxy than the Lord Christ himself demanded. I will not subject his person to any process of psychological dissection. I will not presume to analyse its contents by any experiment of metaphysical chemistry. I walk daily in the midst of God's mysteries. The grass blade which lifts its green leaf in the spring time is to me a mystery. It differs from the clod from which it springs, and contains a principle of life which I cannot expound. The fly which flits across the window pane is to me a mystery. As I approach, it spreads its wing of gossamer, and is gone. The fly differs from the plant, and has something in its nature which I cannot properly define. The human infant smiling in the mother's face, is to me a mystery. The infant differs from the insect. A subtle principle of intelligence is there, but after what manner it is there, I cannot adequately explain. And when the person of the Lord Christ is presented to me, what wonder if I cannot analyze and expound his interior nature? If men offer me their theories concerning the life of the grass blade or the insect, the intelligence of the infant, or the interior nature of the Lord, I am surely at liberty to reject their theories, and to give my reasons for rejecting them, without being justly liable to the charge of slighting the facts themselves.

I have no hesitation, then, in discarding any theories relating to the person of Christ, which seem to me inconsistent with enlightened reason, reverently exercised, and the representations of the Sacred Scriptures. And I will do so, though I should have no language more precise to offer, than that of the Scripture itself. Jesus is "the Christ, the Son of the living God." I will accept him as such, gratefully and reverently. A work more worthy awaits me, I think, than any curious dissection of his person, or analysis of its contents. A work more worthy, I think, awaits me, and you, too, if we have only sufficient grace to be worthy of it. And it is this: to look unto Jesus in daily Faith, and imbibe the lessons of Divine Love and Wisdom which the Messiah set forth—to accept him as the Medium through which a Merciful God seeks to reconcile unto himself a sinful world. God your Saviour, has manifested Christ as the means of your Salvation Turn not away, then, from the surpassing glory of that manifested Life. Nor fail to open your hearts to the moving influences of that awful Death, at which the very earth trembled, and daylight faded into darkness. Behold the broken sepulchre, and in the Resurrection there revealed, see life and immortality brought clearly to light, and rejoice in Hope. And as you discern the form of the Risen Lord Ascending to the heavens, let your heads be bowed in reverence, and your hearts glow with love. For, remember his prayer on behalf of his faithful followers, that they should be with him where he is. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, then, who in mercy, hath begotten us to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away.—Amen. Amen.

APPENDIX.

(*Note, Page* 14.)

The following remarks on the theory of the "two natures," originally printed in the *Bible Christian*, we reprint here :—

Jesus says, "My Father is greater than I." (John xiv. 28.) And again he says, "My Father is greater than all." (John x. 29.) To the same effect also is the language of the great Apostle of the Gentiles :—"*But I would have you know*, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God." (1 Cor. xi. 3.) Of a similar import is a large class of passages in the Bible. Their meaning is obvious,—it cannot be mistaken. They teach the subordination of the Son to the Father; they teach the subordination of Christ to God.

We all know, however, by what means it is sought to evade the force of such plain and powerful testimony of our Saviour and his Apostles. We are very well aware, how it is sought to make their words have no meaning in the controversy concerning Christ's Supreme Deity, which, of course, forms an important portion of the general controversy concerning the Trinity. It is by a very ingenious theory, but a most unwarrantable one. It is *assumed* that Christ had *two natures*; and by a dexterous employment of this assumption, the advocates of the tri-une theory of the Godhead, seek to nullify every plain statement of the Scriptures, regarding the supremacy of the Father, and the subordination of the Son. But the assumption is *entirely gratuitous*, adopted solely with a view to meet the pressing exigency before us. It is a pure fallacy—a mere logical artifice; and yet without it, the Trinitarian ground could not be maintained one moment. It is assumed that Christ had two natures—one Divine and the other human :—that he was perfect God and perfect man mysteriously combined. And then it is thought, that the force of the direct statements which teach his subordination, is turned aside by asserting, that such things were affirmed of, and by, our Lord, in reference to his human nature only. This is a mournful way of dealing with the obvious teachings of the Word of God. That it meets with so general a reception, affords lamentable proof of the readiness of men to adopt any method of explanation, which will enable them to cling to their favorite notions. Again we say, this distinction of two natures in Christ is a mere gratuitous assumption, adopted to meet the emergency of the case. Such a distinction is nowhere made in the Bible. Nowhere it is said, "This is spoken of, or by, Christ, in reference to his human nature," or, "This in reference to his Divine nature." We look in vain for the statement of such a doctrine as that of the "two natures," in the Scriptures. Nowhere is it said in the sacred records, that "our Saviour had two natures." Such an expression is not to be found from the beginning of Genesis to the end of Revelation. Well hath it been styled "a mere human invention, to bolster up a human error."

In thus stating with such great plainness our opinion concerning the common doctrine of the two natures in Christ, we are not insensible to the fact, that to many minds, some of our expressions may appear abrupt, unauthorized, and dogmatical. We make free confession that we have not endeavoured to trim, or soften, or smooth our phrase in this matter. We believe the theory of the two natures to be fallacious, and we have ventured to say so very plainly. We have styled it a mere assumption, because it directly rests upon a mere assumption. It is high time that people should look to this—it is high time that the attention of the inquirer should be fairly directed to it; for on it really depends for support, the doctrine of the Trinity. If this prop be unsound, the whole structure of the tri-une theory of the Godhead must topple and fall.

And it *is* unsound. We pray the reader's calm and candid attention for a few minutes. Let us look at the mode of proof, by which it is sought to be established. Two Scripture phrases (or classes of phrases) are produced, in one of which it is said Christ's Supreme Deity is taught, and in the other, his subordinate nature. Both, it is urged, must be admitted in the sense attached to them, and from this it is urged that Christ had two natures. The theory thus constructed, is then employed to defend the doctrine of Christ's supremacy, against the overwhelming evidence of Scripture, teaching his subordination, which can be arrayed against it. Now, we ask the candid and discriminating reader to mark the fallacy. Is it not plain, that, in the first instance, in constructing the theory of the two natures, the real point in controversy, (Christ's Supreme Deity) is gratuitously assumed, or taken for granted, without proof? And then the theory *thus fallaciously constructed*, is employed to protect the very doctrine *which was gratuitously assumed for the purpose of constructing it.* Is not the fallacy obvious? We ask the reader to consider this point carefully. Christ's Supreme Deity must be satisfactorily proved *before* the doctrine of the two natures can be established. And this just brings us back to the primary question.

We say, then, without any hesitation, that it is impossible to construct the theory of the two natures, without resorting to the fallacy of "begging the question." or assuming that to be true, which is the very point in dispute. Nothing short of a distinct Scriptural statement could warrant its adoption by the Scriptural Christian. And this, as we have already said, is nowhere to be found.

There is great danger to be apprehended from the admission of gratuitous assumptions into the interpretation of Scripture. With such a liberty, men might prove almost any thing from the sacred volume, and find means to evade the force of any argument, however cogent and precise. Let us illustrate by an example. Christianity is universally held to be a religion of *peace;* our Saviour inculcated peaceful principles; his own life corresponded with his precepts,—it was eminently peaceful; "peace on earth" was the strain which ushered him into the world, and "peace" was the legacy he bequeathed to his disciples on his departure from it. But suppose a sect should arise, claiming to be his followers, who should assert that Christianity was a *warfaring* religion; that, in fact, it was a Christian duty to prosecute war far and wide; and this, not merely defensive war, but aggressive war,—a war which should lead them to invade unoffending and defenceless foreign nations, murder their people, destroy their property, and desolate their homes. Suppose we were to enter on an argument with such persons, in order to shew them how utterly opposite their views of Christianity were to the whole teaching and spirit of the religion as represented in the New Testament, and, in doing so, we should cite passage after passage affording the

clearest proof that Christ was a teacher of peace. Suppose all this done; and our warfaring Christians should reply.—"All you have urged we fully admit; but it does not affect the question at issue. The passages you cite have reference merely to Christ in his character as a *peacemaker*, but do not bear against his character as a *warfarer*. Remember how he said, 'I came not to send peace but a sword.' and again, 'He that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one.' You do not seem to understand that he is to be viewed in two distinct lights; you do not seem to apprehend that he was both a peacemaker and a warfarer." To this very strange reply we should naturally answer,—"Your distinction of two characters in Christ is a pure assumption,—it has no proper foundation; and we put it to you, as candid and conscientious people, will you avail yourselves of such an artifice to maintain your position, and to evade the prevalent teaching of the Scripture against you." We are then met by the rejoinder, that it is necessary to make the assumption of the two-fold character of our Lord, in order to interpret such a passage as that wherein he says he "came to send a sword," in harmony with that other teachings of the Scriptures concerning him.

Now the analogy is obvious between this case and that which is more particularly under review. In both cases, the general teaching of Scripture is plain, powerful, precise, and not to be misunderstood; but, in both cases, there are a few texts to be found which clash, apparently, with the general teaching. Rightly understood, they will be found to involve no contradiction. It is our business, then to endeavour to understand them, and to discover how they may be interpreted in harmony with the current language and general tenor of Scripture. We are not at liberty to make gratuitous assumptions to suit our own purposes, and to save some favorite doctrinal theory from being overthrown. Common sense revolts at the assumption, which would unite two characters in Christ so entirely incompatible as those of a perfect peacemaker and a bloody warfarer. And surely the assumption is not less unreasonable and impossible, which would combine in one and the same person the attributes of the Supreme God and the qualities of a mortal man. It is to assume that the mind of that person is at once created and uncreated, finite and infinite,—than which no greater contradiction can be supposed or asserted.

But even this assumption of *two natures* in our Lord cannot be made to cover all the circumstances of the case, and protect the theory of Christ's Supreme Deity from the difficulties which press upon it from the plain statements of Scripture. Those statements not only deny the supremacy of the Son, but they affirm the sole supremacy of the Father. In thus making expre s affirmation of the Supreme Deity of the *Father only*, they obviously exclude the Supreme Deity of the Son in any and every sense. Let us advert to what Christ says of the time of his coming to judgment:—"Of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my *Father only*." (Matth. xxiv. 36.) In the parallel passage in Mark (xiii. 32), it is thus written:—"Of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels who are in heaven, *neither the Son*, but the Father." In these passages it is evident that our Saviour disavows knowledge of the event referred to, in every sense, and assigns that knowledge to the Father *exclusively*. Here, then, is a difficulty which cannot be met even by the assumption of the two natures. By what ingenuity the force of these passages is to be evaded, and their plain statements set aside, we cannot even conjecture. We have seen the

Orthodox expositions of these texts; and they do not seem to us to have even the poor merit of plausibility.

Another objection we have to urge against this assumed theory of two natures (and certainly not the least serious one) is, that it imputes equivocation to our Saviour. If ever there had been any intimation given, either by himself or by any of the sacred writers, that our Lord had two natures, and that sometimes he spoke in the one, and sometimes in the other, we should not feel justified in urging so very serious a charge against the theory under notice. But no such intimation ever was given. We feel bound, therefore, in vindication of the integrity and consistency of our Lord Jesus Christ, to bear solemn testimony against so dangerous and so groundless an assumption. What! shall be said of him "in whose mouth guile was never found," that he explicitly disowned knowledge of the time of an event, when in reality he was in full possession of that knowledge? Remember the answer he gave to the mother, who came to him requesting for her sons certain places of dignity in his kingdom. His reply was,—"To sit on my right hand and on my left *is not mine to give*, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father." (Matt. xx. 23.) Shall it be said, we ask again, of him who knew no deceit, that he positively disclaimed all power to confer a certain privilege, when in reality that power was fully his? Suppose any of us were to go to a governor of this Province, and apply to him for a certain office; and suppose he were to say plainly, and without any explanation, that that office was not in his power to grant,—that the sovereign of Britain kept its bestowal in his own hands. What would be our inference? Surely it would be that the governor had it not in his power to bestow the office. And if any one claiming to be the governor's especial friend, should afterwards seek to draw a line of distinction between his personal and his official capacity, and say that he really had the power, and that his denial of it was only to be understood in reference to one of his two capacities,—in such a case, would not every right-minded man regard the denial in the light of a wretched equivocation? Now, shall we be bold enough to place our Saviour in a similar position, by saying that he really had the power to confer the dignity on Zebedee's sons, while he positively and unqualifiedly disclaimed it? We honour Christ too well to impute any such equivocation to him. We reverence him too highly to suppose that he would employ language so calculated to mislead those whom he immediately addressed, and so calculated to mislead every simple-minded reader of the Bible. Our opinion of the Saviour is this:—that whenever he spoke, he meant just what he said,—without the slightest approach to equivocation,—without any mental reservation whatsoever.

It is of great importance that we should look closely to this theory of the two natures in Christ. It makes our Lord a shifting image, instead of a distinct reality. It throws a cloud of obscurity about him, who was the brightness of the Father's glory. According to it, he is now one thing, and then another; and thus we are prevented from gaining any clear and definite perceptions of his person or his character. Nothing has ever surprised us more, than to mark with what unsuspecting confidence the Trinitarian controversialist glides from the one "nature" of Christ to the other, just as he finds it convenient for his argument. It is but seldom he thinks it necessary to attempt any proof of the "two natures." Yet, without its aid, he could not even pretend to withstand the Scriptural arguments brought

against the Trinitarian theory, so plain, so powerful, so precise, and so overwhelming in number. What can be more remarkable, than to hear and read of men first *admitting the subordination of the Son*, and then proceeding *to prove his Supreme Deity?* This has about the same meaning as if they were first to *admit* a thing to be *black*, and then proceed to *prove* that it is *white*. It has about the same meaning, as if they were first to *admit* a figure to be a *circle*, and then proceed to *prove* that it is a *triangle*.

Here we must pause, and leave the reader to his own reflections. He has the Holy Scriptures, let him read and judge for himself.

(*Note, Page* 17.)

TABLE EXHIBITING AT ONE VIEW THE NUMBER OF INSTANCES IN THE SEVERAL BOOKS OF *THE NEW TESTAMENT*, IN WHICH THE APPELLATION *GOD* IS APPLIED TO *THE ALMIGHTY*, AND TO *HIS SON* JESUS CHRIST.

ACCORDING TO THE AUTHORIZED VERSION, THE WORD God IS APPLIED.

In the following Books.	To a Being distinct from Christ.	To Christ himself.	To Divine Messengers or to Magistrates	As an epithet of strength or excellence.	In the singular or plur. to Idols or Heathen Deities.
	Times.	*Times.*	*Times.*	*Times.*	*Times.*
Matthew...	55.....	1.....	.....	.....	.....
Mark	52.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Luke	124 & 1*s*....	.....	.....	1 *pr*..	.....
John	81 & 1*s*....	1 *al*... 2 *pr*..	2.....	.....	.....
Acts.....	166 & 2*s*....	1 *s*.... 1 ...	.....	.....	8.....
Romans.....	160 & 1*s*....	1 *al*.....	.....	1.....	.....
1 Corin.....	100 & 1*s*....	.....	.....	3.....	2.....
2 Corin.....	74.....	.....	.....	.....	1.....
Galatians...	31.....	.....	.....	.....	1.....
Ephes.....	32.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Philipp.....	22.....	.....	.....	.....	1.....
Coloss.....	22.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
1 Thess.....	37 & 1*s*....	.....	.....	1.....	.....
2 Thess.....	18.....	.....	1.....	.....	.....
1 Tim.....	21.....	1 *al*.	.....	.....	.....
2 Tim.....	14 & 1*s*....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Titus	12 or 13...	1 *am*....	.....	.....	.....
Philemon...	2.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Hebrews...	70 & 1*s*....	1.....	.....	.....	.....
James	17.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
1 Peter.....	39 & 1s....	.....	.....	.....	.....
2 Peter.....	6 or 7.....	1 *am*....	.....	.....	.....
1 John.....	62 or 63...	1 *s*.... 1 *al*...	.....	.....	.....
2 John.....	4.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
3 John.....	2.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Jude	5.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Revela.....	98.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Total.....	1326	13*	3†	6‡	13‖

☞ MARKS.—*s*. denotes supplied; *pr*. probably; *al*. alleged; *am*. ambiguously.

* Matt. i. 23. John i. 1; x. 33; xx. 28. Acts vii. 59; xx. 28. Rom. ix. 5. 1 Tim. iii. 16. Titus ii. 13. Heb. i. 8. 2 Peter i. 1. 1 John iii. 16; v. 20.

† John x. 34 35. 2 Thess. ii. 4.

‡ Luke ii. 40. Rom. i. 16. 1 Cor. i. 18. 24,2. 1 Thess. iv. 16.—There are probably several other instances in which the word *God* is used in the Christian Scriptures as an epithet denoting intensity, power, or excellence.

‖ Acts vii. 40 43; xii. 22; xiv. 11; xvii. 18,23; xix. 26; xxviii. 6. 1. Cor. viii. 5.2. 2 Cor. iv., 4. Gal. iv. 8. Phil. iii. 19.

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